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OGC 79-06139

5 July 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Agency Security Classification Officer  
ISAS/DDA

FROM :   
Office of General Counsel

25X1

SUBJECT : Executive Order 12065: Revision of Agency  
Classification Guides

1. This is in response to  memorandum, dated 15 June 1979, requesting comments or recommendations for revising the Agency classification guides.

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2. First, the four guides should be combined to form a single Agency Guide. Individuals attempting to classify derivatively by using the existing guides find the process frustrating, tedious, and time-inefficient. Moreover, there are several inconsistencies in the way some information is treated by different directorates; thus, creation of a single guide would diminish the likelihood of inconsistent classification instructions.

3. Secondly, the Guide should be organized by subject rather than by office in order to be more readily useable by all Agency components.

4. Third, the Guide should retain a foreword or other instructions precisely delineating how it may be used and by whom. On this point, by the way, we have reached the conclusion that, if a subject is addressed by the Guide, even an original classifier ought to be mandated to use the Guide rather than to hazard a guess that possibly results in inconsistent decisions. This policy would, of course, require that the Guide be written with greater clarity and precision than is now generally the case. The alternate, but one that we do not favor, would be to draft more general guidance that does not mandate any action or establish precise instructions. Such guidance, however, would not provide classification levels, duration, or authority for derivative classifiers. As you may recall, derivative guides are not required under the Order.

Unclassified When  
Separated From Attachment

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5. As a matter of procedure, you may wish to establish a three-stage review process. First, we suggest canvassing Agency components to identify all information believed to require classification. After this information is accumulated, it should be categorized, although not necessarily along the lines established in the existing guides, to create a single classification guide. [Alternatively, using the existing guides as a starting point, revise each category one at a time, utilizing the substantive expertise of the various Agency components to identify subject areas with greater specificity and integrating the information now scattered throughout the four guides.] Second, after a single guide is drafted, a second review must be made to ensure that information is listed in the appropriate category and no unnecessary overlap exists. While there may very well be some instances where the complexity of the subject matter would warrant a dual and, of course, consistent listing, duality should be the exception. Finally, a third review by one or two individuals would be useful, essentially for editorial purposes. Thereafter, the Guide could be submitted for appropriate approval.

6. You should also categorize the information in a way that gives the classifier a simpler and clearer set of instructions. Thus, using category 9a of the DDA guide as an example, you might arrange the material as follows:

MILITARY PLANS, WEAPONS, OR OPERATIONS

(1) INTELLIGENCE PRODUCT: Information derived from or through intelligence sources or methods on foreign intentions. . . .

\* \* \*

(2) U.S. INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION: Information that could reveal U.S. capabilities or the extent or degree of success achieved by the U.S. in the collection. . . .

\* \* \*

(3) U.S. DEFENSE: Information that could reveal defense plans or posture of the United States. . . .

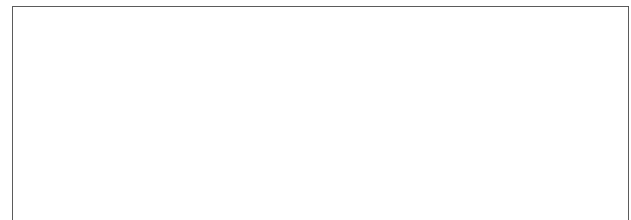
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(4) U.S. WEAPONS: Information that could reveal. . . .

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These categories, if adequate, could then be subcategorized by giving instructions on how to protect, for example, raw product versus finished product or analysis. Since we suggest a de novo review, and there is no reason to be constrained by the existing organization, categories (1) and (2), supra, could be combined. The collection category could be further divided into "capabilities," "intentions," "targets," "success," "raw data," and the weapons category could be further divided into "intentions," "systems," or some other appropriate listing. These subcategories, while somewhat incomplete, are illustrative of the direction the drafters of a new Guide ought to take so as to prepare a usable set of classification instructions. The upper case headings are intended to catch the user's eye and facilitate classification.

7. Attached I have submitted a crude cut-and-paste rendition of what I have in mind with respect to combining each of the four existing guides. You will note that many of the subcategories have been given clearly inconsistent treatment by the different directorate guides, e.g., category 9a(2) on my list encompasses subcategories listed under 9(a)(2), (3), and (1) in the existing guides. Also, classification instructions are sometimes inconsistent, with "TS" information in one guide being listed as "S" information in another. These two problems highlight, I believe, the need for a single, precise Agency Guide. Please contact me at extension 7541 if you have any questions or comments.



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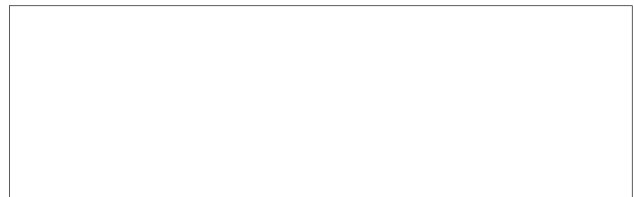
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